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64

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

INFO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ROME

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AFDROUGHT ROME FOR SKILES

E.O. 11652:M/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF 1975 SAHEL HARVEST YIELD

1. WHILE IT IS TOO EARLY TO MAKE USEFUL PREDICTIONS ON
1975 CROP YIELDS IN SAHEL COUNTRIES, RAINFALL TOTALS FOR
JUNE AND JULY HAVE LED TO SPECULATION ABOUT NEAR NORMAL
1975 HARVESTS THROUGHOUT MUCH OF THE SAHEL AREA. GOVERN-
MENTS AND DONORS WILL BE PAYING CLOSE ATTENTION TO AUGUST
AND EARLY SEPTEMBER RAINFALL TOTALS SINCE THESE WILL SIG-
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NIFICANTLY AFFECT OVERALL 1975 CROP YIELD. AT THIS JUNC-

TURE IN HARVEST CYCLE, AID/W BELIEVES IT USEFUL TO SHARE WITH RDO'S AND CDO'S ITS PRELIMINARY VIEWS ON AID INVOLVEMENT IN UP-COMING HOST GOVERNMENT/DONOR EFFORTS TO ASSESS MAGNITUDE OF 1975 HARVEST.

2. AS WILL BE RECALLED, FORMAL MULTI-DONOR MISSIONS (MDM) WERE ESTABLISHED IN 1973 AND 1974 UNDER AUSPICES OF FAO/OSRO TO ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF SAHEL-DE DROUGHT AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON DONATED-FOOD NEEDS AND RELATED REQUIREMENTS (I.E., WAREHOUSING, TRANSPORT, AND FOOD PROTECTION). THESE FORMAL MDM SURVEYS WERE CONSIDERED NECESSARY BECAUSE THE MAGNITUDE OF DROUGHT-(RELATED FOOD SHORTAGES HAD SEVERELY STRAINED LOCAL ANALYTICAL AND LOGISTICAL CAPABILITY. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY TRUE IN CASE OF AID WITH ITS LIMITED NUMBER OF STAFF STATIONED IN THE SAHEL AT THE TIME. UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, MDM SURVEY PROVED ESSENTIAL TO DONOR EFFORTS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE RESPONSE IN FACE OF EMERGENCY CONDITIONS.

3. REPORTS FROM FIELD POSTS OVER PAST SEVERAL MONTHS HAVE INDICATED THAT FARMERS IN THE SAHEL HAVE BEGUN TO REPLENISH THEIR PERSONAL RESERVES AS A RESULT OF A COMPARATIVELY GOOD 1974 HARVEST AND SAHEL GOVERNMENTS HAVE REINSTITUTED GRAIN RESERVE PROGRAMS WHICH WERE INTERRUPTED BY THE DROUGHT. ANALYSTS ARE SUGGESTING THAT, IF 1975 RAINFALL PATTERN CONTINUES, FOOD DEFICITS IN THE SAHEL COUNTRIES SHOULD PROVE LOWEST IN SEVERAL YEARS. IN VIEW OF GENERALLY IMPROVING FOOD AVAILABILITY SITUATION AND ADDITIONAL ANALYTICAL COMPETENCE IN PLACE, AID BELIEVES THAT 1975 HARVEST ASSESSMENT CAN BEST BE UNDERTAKEN BY LOCAL MULTI-DONOR COMMITTEE WORKING IN CONJUNCTION WITH HOST GOVERNMENT COUNTERPARTS. WOULD SEEM APPROPRIATE THAT UNDP/FAO REPRESENTATIVE TAKE LEAD ON DONOR SIDE IN CONVENING SUCH A COMMITTEE AFTER DUE CONSULTATION WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. AID WOULD ASSIGN A REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE FROM ITS LOCAL OFFICE OR, IF RDO/CDO BELIEVED NECESSARY, FROM A REGIONAL OFFICE. THE GOVERNMENT/DONOR ASSESSMENT GROUP WOULD BE EXPECTED TO ISSUE A SUMMARY REPORT ON FINDINGS (COVERING PRODUCTION YIELDS MINUS INSECT CROP DESTRUCTION, DONATED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STOCK AVAILABILITIES/PIPELINE, CONSUMPTION DRAWDOWN RATES, ETC.) WHICH WOULD ASSIST PRINCIPAL DONORS IN THEIR DELIBERATIONS ON FOOD GRAIN COMMITMENTS FOR 1976. HOPEFULLY THIS SUMMARY REPORT WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO DONORS BY LATE NOVEMBER 1975 SO THAT PROVISION CAN BE MADE TO INSURE GRAIN DELIVERIES TO THE SAHEL--IF REQUIRED --PRIOR TO JUNE 1976.

4. AID/W WELCOMES ANY COMMENTS RDO/CDO'S MAY HAVE ON ABOVE OUTLINED APPROACH TO REQUIREMENT FOR 1975 CROP ASSESSMENT. WE WILL BE DISCUSSING THIS PROPOSAL WITH OSRO/ROME AND OTHER CONCERNED DONORS OVER NEXT FEW WEEKS AND REPORT THEIR INCLINATIONS THIS AREA TO FIELD POSTS IN MID-SEPTEMBER. IN MEANTIME RECOMMEND THAT NO RPT NO FORMAL DISCUSSIONS BE HELD WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS ON PROPOSED ASSESSMENT STRATEGY.

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